

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, PL

SUBJECT: POLISH PRESS JOINS ATTACK ON SOLZHENITSYN

1. SUMMARY: WITH COMMENTARIES IN TRYBUNA LUDU ON JANUARY 8 AND ZYCIE WARSZAWY ON JANUARY 9, POLAND HAS JOINED THE ATTACK ON SOLZHENITSYN FOR HIS LATEST BOOK, "GULAG ARCHIPELAGO". NEITHER ATTACK IS PARTICULARLY VIRULENT AND THE THEME OF BOTH IS THAT SOLZHENITSYN IS BEING USED BY WESTERN OPPONENTS OF DETENTE. END SUMMARY

2. THE TRYBUNA LUDU ARTICLE, ENTITLED "HATRED AND DIVERSION", SAYS THAT FOR A LONG TIME SOLZHENITSYN HAS BEEN A "WARD" OF A PART OF THE WESTERN PRESS AND PUBLISHING ESTABLISHMENT, USED "EXCESSIVELY" BY REACTIONARY CIRCLES, NOT FOR ARTISTIC BUT FOR POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS. SOLZHENITSYN IS ACCUSED OF PRESENTING HIS OWN COUNTRY AND HIS OWN PEOPLE IN THE WORST POSSIBLE LIGHT, OF BEING

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OPPOSED TO PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE, AND OF CALLING FOR THE

WESTERN COUNTRIES TO INTERVENE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE SOVIET UNION. "GULAG", THE ARTICLE CONTINUES, IS AN ATTACK ON THE SYSTEM WHICH HAS "REIGNED" IN THE SOVIET UNION SINCE 1918, IN WHICH SOLZHENITSYN FAVORABLY CONTRASTS TSARIST RUSSIA WITH THE SOVIET UNION, AND IN WHICH "EVEN THE HITLERITE CRIMINALS CAN COUNT ON HIS UNDERSTANDING". THE ARTICLE WINDS UP WITH A DEFENSE OF SOVIET "PEACEFUL POLICIES" AND THE OBSERVATION THAT THIS NEW CAMPAIGN OF SLANDER OF THE SOVIET UNION, ITS SYSTEM, AND ITS POLICIES, "THIS NEW ATTEMPT TO SPREAD ANTI-COMMUNIST HYSTERIA", MUST BE REGARDED AS A CONSCIOUS EFFORT AGAINST THE MAIN FORCES OF DETENTE AND PEACE.

3. THE TRYBUNA LUDU ARTICLE DOES NOT MENTION VLASOV OR GIVE ANY CLEAR INDICATION OF THE CONTENT OF THE BOOK, EXCEPT THROUGH THE TITLE, WHICH WILL BE GRAPHIC ENOUGH TO MILLIONS OF POLES WHO EITHER HAD RELATIVES AND FRIENDS IN THE CAMPS OR KNOW OF THEIR EXISTENCE FROM THE STORIES OF OTHERS.

4. THE ZYCIE WARSZAWY ARTICLE GIVES A CLEARER IDEA OF THE SUBJECT OF SOLZHENITSYN'S NEW BOOK BY QUOTING AT SOME LENGTH FROM TASS COMMENTATOR KULIK'S ATTACK ON THE BOOK AND ON HARRISON SALISBURY FOR WRITING ABOUT IT. IT ALSO SCOFFS AT SOLZHENITSYN'S VIEWS ON TSARIST RUSSIA AND THE WORLD WAR II GERMAN OCCUPATION, NOTING IN THE CASE OF THE LATTER THAT SOLZHENITSYN COULD BE COMPARED WITH NAS FRANK AND ARTUR ROSENBERG AS AN APOLOGIST FOR HITLER. AS FOR SOLZHENITSYN'S ROLE AS A WRITER, HE IS DISMISSED AS A SENSATIONALIST WHO MIGHT BE COMPARED TO HEROSTRATUS, THE LEGENDARY TAILOR OF EPHEBUS, WHO BURNED DOWN THE TEMPLE OF ARTEMIS TO ATTAIN FAME.

5. LIKE THE TRYBUNA LUDU ARTICLE, THE ZYCIE WARSZAWY ONE CONCLUDES WITH A DEFENSE OF DETENTE AND THE OBSERVATION THAT IT IS TO BE REGRETTED THAT SOME SERIOUS NEWSPAPERS HAVE LENT THEMSELVES TO THIS ANTI-SOVIET (AND THUS ANTI-DETENTE) CAMPAIGN WHICH IS FEEDING ON THE PUBLICATION OF THE NEW SOLZHENITSYN BOOK.

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6. COMMENT: WE ARE STRUCK BY THE FACT THAT, ALTHOUGH POLISH PRESS COMMENTARIES NORMALLY ARE SIGNED WITH THE FULL NAMES OR INITIALS OF IDENTIFIABLE JOURNALISTS, THESE TWO ARE SIGNED BY INITIALS WHICH WE CANNOT ASCRIBE TO KNOWN WRITERS. THE TRYBUNA ARTICLE IS SIGNED MK. A POLISH CATHOLIC WRITER SUGGESTED TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT THIS WAS THE REVERSE OF THE INITIALS OF THE WELL-KNOWN COMMENTATOR KAROL MALCUZYNSKI. THE ZYCIE ARTICLE

IS SIGNED A. WIT., WHICH WE ASSUME IS A PSEUDONYM.
IN ANY CASE,IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT SELF-
RESPECTING POLISH JOURNALISTS WILL NOT WISH TO
BE IDENTIFIED PUBLICLY WITH THE DEFENSE OF SOVIET
UNION AGAINST A WELL-KNOWN LIBERAL RUSSIAN WRITER.
MOST POLES WILL CONCLUDE THAT THE ARTICLES APPEARED AT SOVIET
DIRECTION AND THEIR APPETITES FOR HEARING MORE ABOUT THE BOOK
OR READING IT WILL BE WHETTED.
DAVIES

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